

Remarks in Sydney, Australia November 21, 1996

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Prime Minister. Thank you, Premier Carr. Mr. Lord Mayor, Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Carr. Andrew Hoy, thank you very much for reminding us how you defeated us in Atlanta—[laughter]—and thank you for what you said about the Olympics.

Premier, you invited me to come back in the year 2000 to the Olympics. I have to make full disclosure—this morning when I woke up, the very first thing Hillary said to me was, “Now, in 2000, I think you ought to make me your official representative to the Olympics in Sydney,” which means I suppose I’ll have to come back as her valet if I wish to come. [Laughter] But I’ve had such a good time here, I’d like to come back in any capacity.

I thank you all very much for your hospitality. It’s a great privilege for me to stand here in Sydney Harbor, to be in these beautiful botanical gardens, where I had the privilege this morning to go on my morning run right by this site; to see the magnificent opera house, where I had the chance to tour on an impromptu basis this morning. A wonderful and surprised guard even took me up to the organ, and I virtually got to count all 10,500 pipes. [Laughter] This is a magnificent place. I’m also glad to be here in the shadow of Harbor Bridge. If any of you followed our campaign at all, you know I’m kind of into bridges this year. [Laughter] And I think that that’s a bridge that will take you into the 21st century in good shape.

As the Prime Minister and the Premier have said, Americans have visited Sydney and felt welcome for a long time. You might be interested to know that almost exactly 100 years ago, our great American writer Mark Twain came to Australia. Now, Mark Twain is famous for many things, his great books “Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court,” “Tom Sawyer,” “Huckleberry Finn,” all those books, but those of us in public life in America appreciate him because he was always puncturing the pompous and always reminding people that they should have a very sort of philosophical and good-humored attitude about their troubles in life.

And we got to talking about Mark Twain last night in this very harbor, and I told the Prime

Minister—I said, “Prime Minister, you’re riding high now, but the first time you get in trouble remember what Mark Twain said about dogs. Mark Twain said, ‘Every dog should have a few fleas; keeps them from worrying so much about being a dog.’” [Laughter] Now, whenever I complain at home, that’s what my staff tells me. Just once I’d like to be a flea instead of a dog, though, in this business. [Laughter]

Anyway, Mark Twain came here almost 100 years ago, and I found out something that I did not know until we decided to make this trip. Like all of us, he was struck by what he said was “the lavish hospitality of Sydney’s people.” He liked the warmth of Sydney in every way. But he said that Sydney reminded him, more than any other place, of one particular town in America, which was exactly as far north of the Equator as Sydney is south of it, my hometown, Little Rock, Arkansas. Interesting. Except Sydney got the better of the comparison—[laughter]—because while he said they were a lot alike and the people were very friendly, Sydney was better because it didn’t have Little Rock’s cold winters. He wrote, “You could cut up an Arkansas winter into a hundred Sydney winters and still have enough left for Arkansas and all the poor.” Well, that’s another reason for me to come back in Sydney’s winter, to see if it’s true.

This is a remarkable community and a remarkable nation. In this new global culture that we’re all experiencing, Australia’s contribution has been far out of proportion to its population in modern art, in learning, in music, in theater, in opera, in the cinema; the novels of Patrick White, Thomas Keneally, David Malouf; the paintings of Sidney Nolan, Russell Drysdale, Utopia artists; the films of Baz Luhrmann, Peter Weir, and so many others; and according to the young people in my group, bands like Midnight Oil and Silverchair; Dame Joan Sutherland; and great jazz musicians. I want to thank you, Prime Minister, for making it possible for me to hear James Morrison and Grace Knight yesterday. They were magnificent. Thank you very much.

I’m glad to stand here today with Andrew Hoy, who did lead your remarkable team to

its remarkable showing in the centennial Olympics in Atlanta. His own gold medal performance, repeating his victory in Barcelona, were one of the things that made the games such a great success. And I am very pleased that at the dawn of our new century, the Olympic torch will arrive here in Sydney. We know the Olympics will be an enormous success for Sydney, just as they were for Atlanta.

The Olympics have captured the imagination and the heart of people everywhere. I have thought a lot about why, maybe because we all love athletics and maybe because we all love competition, but I think there's more to it than that. And there's something I hope you will be able to play upon here in Sydney because you're perfectly positioned to do it. I think people yearn for the Olympics today because they work pretty much the way we think the world should work. There are rules and everybody follows them, and everybody has a chance to play without regard to their race or gender or where they start out in life, and people are valued based on their performance and their effort.

Even those who do not win medals—and most of the people who will come to Sydney won't come close to winning a medal—but everybody gets a chance to do his or her best, to reach down deep inside, and everybody's better off for having tried. Unlike so many other human endeavors, including the field of politics, no one wins by tripping his or her opponent up in the competition or standing before a microphone and bad-mouthing the other side. You only win by playing by the rules and doing well. And I think the world should work more that way.

When the world comes to Sydney for the Olympics, either literally or over the electronic media, they'll have a chance to see a city and a nation struggling to meet that ideal. We have a chance on the verge of this new century to make it possible for more people than ever in human history to live out their dreams and to live up to their God-given potential.

This city has people who traced their origins to more than 140 different nations. There are only 197 different national groups represented in the Olympics. In our largest county, Los Angeles County, we have people from over 150 of those groups. We're becoming an increasingly interconnected world. Australia has a higher percentage of immigrants who came here and built decent lives and strengthened your country

through hard work than almost any other country on Earth.

When you drive down the streets of Sydney tonight and you look at all these different people making a contribution to your country, think with sadness but prayerful hope about all the people who live around the world who are still being persecuted because they are different from their neighbors, because they have different religious views or they're from different racial or ethnic or tribal groups.

Think of the terrible spectacle we have seen in Africa just in the last few days, hundreds of thousands of refugees trooping back and forth looking for a safe place to spend the night, parents losing their children along the way, just because they're in different tribes. And to those of us of untrained eyes who have never been there, they look the same as those who carry guns and would oppress them.

Think of what it's like in the Holy Land, for all of us who are either Jewish or Muslim or Christians, where people still believe they cannot live with one another because they worship only one God but in a different way.

Think of what it is like in Bosnia, where there is literally biologically no difference between the Serbs, the Croats, and the Muslims; where they belong to different religious groups by accident of political history; where people killed each other's children with abandon after having lived for decades in peace.

But there is a lot of evidence that we can all do better than that. And when the world comes to Sydney, they will see that. So think about that. Think about how every day in every way, when you bring in people who are those like me who trace their roots to England or Ireland or Scotland, to various Asian countries or South Asia or Latin America or the Middle East or Africa—every day you do that when the world is looking at you, you offer a rebuke to all those who would take away the lives and the futures and the fortunes of the children of this world because they are different from them.

We somehow must find a way to let our children define themselves in terms of who they are, not who they are not; in terms of what they believe, not what someone else believes; in terms of what is good inside them and what can be developed into something really beautiful, instead of what can be developed in terms of hatred, so they can know that they're better

than somebody else who's different from them. That is the single great challenge that is keeping us from making the 21st century the era of greatest possibility in human history. And I cannot think of a better place in the entire world, a more shining example of how people can come together as one nation and one community than Sydney, Australia.

I'm so grateful that you'll be here for the Olympics in 2000. I want you to know that the world is looking to you. And I also want you to know that America will keep looking to you. The Prime Minister mentioned our comradeship in World War I, the first time our soldiers ever fought together. The Australians had been in combat for more than 3 years when America's troops first went to France. And one of them asked the Americans, "Are you going to win the war for us?" The American answered, "Well, I hope we'll fight like the Australians." Ever since then the spirit of Australia has been renowned in America. We respect it, and we love working with you.

Again let me say, as I did in Canberra yesterday, the United States and people all over the world are especially in your debt for your determination to end nuclear explosions on Earth and your leadership in helping us to complete the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

We are in your debt for setting a standard of caring about people beyond your shores. Time and again you have sent peacekeepers into harm's way to end bloodshed: Rwanda, Haiti, Somalia, Cambodia. Almost two-thirds of all the United Nations peacekeeping missions have had Australian troops. Whenever the troubled places of the Earth call out, Australia has always been there to help. Throughout the Asia-Pacific re-

gion and the entire world, you are seen as a beacon of strength and freedom and democracy.

Today, when for the first time in history more than half the world's people actually are ruled by governments of their own choosing, we know it is the powerful example of Australia and other freedom-loving peoples that made it possible. Today, more people will live lives of dignity and peace because of the work that Australia has done in the historic struggle for freedom.

So let me say again, I have had a wonderful time here. I have enjoyed it immensely. I am about to go try to survive a golf game with your most famous golfer. But more than anything else, on behalf of all the American people, I want to thank you for what you have done and been for the United States and the world together. And I want to wish you well as we work through this 21st century together. And I want to ask you to remember again when the Olympics comes here, if you can live by the rules which govern the Olympics and show that light to the world, it will stand as a beacon of hope for all that everyone who lives on the face of the Earth can become in this great new century. And that can be the enduring legacy of Sydney in the year 2000.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless Australia and the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. at the Royal Botanical Gardens. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister John Howard of Australia and his wife, Janette; Premier Bob Carr of New South Wales and his wife, Helena; Lord Mayor Frank Sartor of Sydney; Andrew Hoy, equestrian Olympic Gold Medalist; and professional golfer Greg Norman.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Dayton Accords *November 21, 1996*

One year ago today, American diplomacy under the leadership of Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke achieved a peace agreement that ended the worst conflict in Europe since World War II. Over the past year, American soldiers, diplomats, aid workers, volunteers, and public servants have worked tirelessly on the

challenges of implementing the Dayton accords. They have made a world of difference in the lives of the Bosnian people.

The market massacres, sniper alleys, and grim campaigns of ethnic cleansing are over. Since Dayton, we and our international partners have maintained a secure peace, separated and demobilized the former warring parties, held suc-